

## EASTERN HEMLOCK

*Tsuga canadensis* (L.) Carr.

Eastern hemlock is found in scattered stands in nearly every part of the state. Best growth is attained on moist, cool sites. It generally attains a height of 60 - 70 feet, and a diameter of 2 - 3 feet. The terminal shoot is pendulous and bends away from the prevailing winds, quite often toward the east. The trunk usually tapers rapidly from the base. This species can withstand considerable shading.

The **bark** is divided into narrow, rounded ridges covered with thick scales, and varies in color from cinnamon-red to gray. Bark exposed by cuts or bruises shows a purplish tinge



The **leaves** are flat, tapering, generally rounded at the apex, from 1/3 - 2/3 inch long, with a distinct short petiole and so arranged that the twig appears flat. Leaves become progressively shorter towards the tip of the twig. They are dark yellow - green in color with a lustrous upper surface, and a whitish under surface.

The **cones** are about 3/4 inch in length, oblong in shape, light brown, pendant, and suspended on short, slender stalks. Cones mature during the first autumn and generally remain on the branches until the next spring. Seeds are winged and fall during the winter. The **twigs** are very fine, limber, and are not pitchy.

The **wood** is coarse, brittle when very dry, light, strong, difficult to work (as it is likely to separate at one or more of the annual growth rings). It is used for framing, sheathing, roof boards, timbers, and pulp. The bark once was valuable for tanning but has been replaced by chemicals.